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ABSTRACT

This specially developed Informal Reading Inventory for adults is an individually administered test to be used to measure reading performance from level one through level six. The test is designed to indicate the instructional readability level for teaching purposes. The level derived will correspond closely with a comparable level in a graded reader. Similar inventories may be made by the teacher by selecting graded materials from well-controlled adult literacy training books or pamphlets. The results of such inventories will indicate specific materials in which the student has demonstrated his competence. The parts of the informal inventory are: (1) word recognition and analysis; (2) oral reading to check comprehension, reading errors, vocabulary in context, and speed; (3) listening ability (present potential level); and (4) letter and blend recognition to check the students' visual and auditory perception and discrimination. (Author/DL)

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ED 070057

# AN INFORMAL READING INVENTORY

for use by teachers of

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

A REPRODUCTION

Office of ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
State Department of Education
Concord, New Hampshire

03 000 261

## Introduction

This specially developed Informal Reading Inventory for adults is an individually administered test to be used to measure reading performance from level 1 through level 6. The test is designed to indicate the instructional readability level for teaching purposes. The level derived will correspond closely with a comparable level in a graded reader.

Similar inventories may be made by the teacher by selecting graded materials from well controlled adult literacy training books or pamphlets. The results of such inventories will indicate specific materials in which the student has demonstrated his competence.

The parts of the informal inventory are: (1) Word recognition and analysis. This tests word attack skills and vocabulary levels: (2) Oral reading to check comprehension, reading errors, vocabulary in context, and speed: (3) Listening ability (present potential level): and (4) Letter and blend recognition to check the students' visual and auditory perception and discrimination.

As a result of the informal inventory the teacher should be able to determine four levels for each student.

Independent level -Student knows well over 95% of the running words and comprehends the main ideas.

Instructional level -Student knows well over 90% of the running words and comprehends the main ideas.

Frustration level -Student knows 90% or less of the running words and has trouble comprehending the main ideas. At this level the student shows marked increase in tension.

Present Potential level -This is the highest level of graded materials that the student can comprehend easily when the material is read to him.

Word Recognition

Word recognition is usually tested in two ways. Flash, first, which determined the extent of the students' sight vocabulary, is tested by moving two 3" x 5" cards down a column of words shutter fashion. Each word is exposed for about one second. If the word is missed, expose the word for the analysis - as explained in the next paragraph. Begin this test about two levels below the suspected level of the student. For many, this will mean that you would start with the first list. If the student misses four words on the flash or analysis on any list it is safe to assume that he has reached his frustration level and that the test should be discontinued.

The analysis test is used to determine how well, and in what way, the student can use word attack skills in figuring out new words. This part of the test is not timed and the student is given as much time as is practical (5 to 30 seconds).

In both the flash and the analysis, all responses - correct or not - should be recorded in the teacher's copy of the test. Later the test may be examined to determine if there are

patterns of errors which indicate specific problems needing correction.

The advantage of giving this part of the test first is that the results will give some indication as to where to begin the oral reading test. A good point to begin is on the level where the student has missed two or less words in the flash section of the word recognition test.

Scoring

If the word is pronounced correctly on the flash or analysis place a + in the appropriate column. If the word is pronounced incorrectly, write in the student's response "phonetically".

WORD RECOGNITION AND ANALYSIS

| Level I Words | Flash | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| big | _____ | _____ |
| do | _____ | _____ |
| look | _____ | _____ |
| give | _____ | _____ |
| there | _____ | _____ |
| put | _____ | _____ |
| when | _____ | _____ |
| make | _____ | _____ |
| ride | _____ | _____ |
| so | _____ | _____ |
| have | _____ | _____ |
| talk | _____ | _____ |
| now | _____ | _____ |
| away | _____ | _____ |
| even | _____ | _____ |
| woman | _____ | _____ |
| little | _____ | _____ |
| keep | _____ | _____ |
| every | _____ | _____ |
| jump | _____ | _____ |

WORD RECOGNITION AND ANALYSIS

| Level II Words | Flash | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| write | _____ | _____ |
| more | _____ | _____ |
| painting | _____ | _____ |
| beautiful | _____ | _____ |
| hands | _____ | _____ |
| nothing | _____ | _____ |
| bound | _____ | _____ |
| once | _____ | _____ |
| enough | _____ | _____ |
| anything | _____ | _____ |
| knew | _____ | _____ |
| minute | _____ | _____ |
| wrong | _____ | _____ |
| watched | _____ | _____ |
| that's | _____ | _____ |
| funniest | _____ | _____ |
| American | _____ | _____ |
| can't | _____ | _____ |
| Saturday | _____ | _____ |
| louder | _____ | _____ |

WORD RECOGNITION AND ANALYSIS

| Level III Words | Flash | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| darkness | _____ | _____ |
| pointed | _____ | _____ |
| course | _____ | _____ |
| whose | _____ | _____ |
| angry | _____ | _____ |
| suddenly | _____ | _____ |
| promise | _____ | _____ |
| troubles | _____ | _____ |
| already | _____ | _____ |
| practiced | _____ | _____ |
| yesterday | _____ | _____ |
| teacher | _____ | _____ |
| automobile | _____ | _____ |
| worse | _____ | _____ |
| forward | _____ | _____ |
| chance | _____ | _____ |
| finished | _____ | _____ |
| wrong | _____ | _____ |
| fight | _____ | _____ |
| speech | _____ | _____ |

WORD RECOGNITION AND ANALYSIS

| Level IV Words | Flash | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| aboard | _____ | _____ |
| admire | _____ | _____ |
| bathtub | _____ | _____ |
| careless | _____ | _____ |
| delightful | _____ | _____ |
| enormous | _____ | _____ |
| examine | _____ | _____ |
| glance | _____ | _____ |
| happiness | _____ | _____ |
| kingdom | _____ | _____ |
| library | _____ | _____ |
| mixture | _____ | _____ |
| native | _____ | _____ |
| peak | _____ | _____ |
| rescue | _____ | _____ |
| scarf | _____ | _____ |
| tenth | _____ | _____ |
| voyage | _____ | _____ |
| ox | _____ | _____ |
| we're | _____ | _____ |

WORD RECOGNITION AND ANALYSIS

| Level V Words | Flash | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| ankle | _____ | _____ |
| behave | _____ | _____ |
| clutch | _____ | _____ |
| doesn't | _____ | _____ |
| explosion | _____ | _____ |
| furnish | _____ | _____ |
| generally | _____ | _____ |
| headache | _____ | _____ |
| increase | _____ | _____ |
| junior | _____ | _____ |
| knowledge | _____ | _____ |
| length | _____ | _____ |
| medicine | _____ | _____ |
| relative | _____ | _____ |
| necklace | _____ | _____ |
| shock | _____ | _____ |
| traffic | _____ | _____ |
| upset | _____ | _____ |
| wreath | _____ | _____ |
| yawn | _____ | _____ |

| Level VI Words | Flash | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| advertisement | _____ | _____ |
| bureau | _____ | _____ |
| crutch | _____ | _____ |
| dynamite | _____ | _____ |
| fascinate | _____ | _____ |
| harmonica | _____ | _____ |
| launch | _____ | _____ |
| macaroni | _____ | _____ |
| octopus | _____ | _____ |
| posture | _____ | _____ |
| recipe | _____ | _____ |
| shampoo | _____ | _____ |
| swollen | _____ | _____ |
| tissue | _____ | _____ |
| urgent | _____ | _____ |
| wallet | _____ | _____ |
| yolk | _____ | _____ |
| elastic | _____ | _____ |
| belief | _____ | _____ |
| income | _____ | _____ |

## ORAL READING

The student should start the oral reading paragraphs at one level below the highest successfully completed level of the word recognition section. If he has not successfully completed any level in the word recognition section omit oral reading.

Have the student continue reading until he misses 10% or more of the running words and/or fails to answer three out of the four questions following each paragraph, since this would be his frustration level. Two paragraphs at each level have been included. This provides for a progress check at a later date or a check for accuracy of administration.

Instructions for scoring paragraphs

| Errors | Ways to Score |
|---|---|
| 1. Word by word reading | -Vertical lines between words |
| 2. Omitted word | -Circle word |
| 3. Repetition | -Write R over the word |
| 4. Doesn't know word | -Write P over the word pronounced for the student |
| 5. Insertion of word or syllable | -Write insertion above word |
| 6. Misses pronunciation | -Put M over the word |
| 7. Hesitation | -Place a check mark over the word |
| 8. Ignores punctuation | -Put X through punctuation |

## ORAL READING PARAGRAPHS

Directions: After student has read each paragraph orally, the teacher reads each question for him and records student's answer beside the question.

### LEVEL I

Part A. I have a boy and a girl. The girl is little. She is like her mother. The boy is big. He is like his father. The girl likes to talk. Her mother likes to talk, too. They talk a lot! I like to talk, too.

Questions

1. How many children do I have?
2. Who is the little girl like?
3. What does she like to do?
4. Why do people like to talk?

Part B. The man has a dog. The woman has a cat. The cat is white. The dog is black. The cat runs and jumps. The dog runs, too. They like to play. They are fun to see. The man and woman like their cat and dog.

Questions

1. Why are the dog and cat fun to see?
2. What two colors are mentioned?
3. What does the woman have?
4. What does the man have?

Level II

Part A. Saturday is the nicest day of the week. Every Saturday we go for a ride. Often we see beautiful things in the country. Once we found the funniest animal. We thought it was a cat. We called to it. It raised its tail higher and higher. Soon we knew it wasn't a cat. We found out from the smell!

Questions

1. What do we do on Saturday?
2. Where do we go on Saturday?
3. What animal did we see on one trip?
4. How did we know what it was?

Part B. On Monday nights I go to school. My wife goes to school with me. We are learning to read and write better. We also learn about our country. We read about America. We find out about the American way of life. That's one reason we go to school. We think it is a good reason. Don't you agree with us?

Questions

1. Where do my wife and I go on Monday nights?
2. What two things are we learning at school?
3. What country are we learning about at school?
4. Why do we go to school?

Level III

Part A. Two men came to the house yesterday. They knocked on the door. Suddenly they turned and ran toward their car. In a moment they returned to our house. Again they knocked, this time much harder. I was afraid, so I called the police. The police promised to come right away, but when they arrived the men had gone. I sure had trouble explaining to the police.

Questions

1. What did the two men do?
2. Why did I call the police?
3. What happened when the police arrived?
4. Why did I have trouble explaining to the police?

Part B. Yesterday we went for a ride in our automobile. We left the house about eight o'clock. Soon we were far out in the country. At noon time we stopped by a tiny lake. In a tree by the lake was a nest of white birds. They made a lot of noise when they saw us. Then one flew at us. My wife ran to the car. She wanted to go home. Guess what we did?

Questions

1. What did we do yesterday?
2. What time did we leave?
3. Where did we stop?
4. Why did my wife run to the car?
5. What do you think we did?

Level IV

Part A. Do you like to talk to people? Do you have a good sense of humor and enjoy explaining things to people? If so, then you have much in common with good salesmen. Are you an understanding and responsible person who is willing to work long hours? Are you somewhat independent and willing to take a chance on things? If so, you have some other things in common with good salesmen. People who are like this should look further into the many kinds of sales jobs.

Questions

1. What are two qualities of a good salesman?
2. Why must a salesman be willing to work long hours?
3. Why would a salesman need to have a sense of humor?
4. Why couldn't everyone be a good salesman?

Part B. Today, most of the bread, cake, and pie that we eat comes from bakeries. Many men work in bakeries. The men who do this work are highly trained. Many of these men have learned to bake just one kind of bread or cake; others have learned to use just one kind of machine. The men who do this work are specialists. Because they can make so much bread and cake at one time they can sell it at a low price. This makes it possible for your local store to carry a large number of baked goods.

Questions

1. Where do we get most of the bread and cake we eat?
2. What do we call people who are trained for one job?
3. Why can bread and cake be sold at a low price?
4. Why are many bakery workers called "specialists"?

Level V

Part A. The Post Office Department of the United States is a big one. It employs more than a half a million people. These include janitors, truck drivers, mail clerks, secretaries and postmen. Most Post Office Department workers get their jobs by taking civil service tests but some get the jobs by other means. Those getting the highest marks on the tests are put on a waiting list. They usually get the jobs that happen to be open. Most of the openings are for postmen. About 40,000 of them are needed each year.

Questions

1. Name two types of jobs available through the Post Office?
2. How many postmen are needed each year?
3. How do the people get their jobs?
4. Why do these people take civil service tests?

Part B. The boss hires and the boss fires. If he makes too many mistakes in hiring he will not be the boss long. If he hires the wrong people for a business he will end up without a business. If he hires the wrong people for a business he is running for someone else, he will be fired! You should know something about his job. It may even help you become a boss yourself some day.

Questions

1. What job does the boss have?
2. What will happen to him if he hires the wrong people?
3. Why should you know about the boss's job?
4. How can the boss end up without a business?

Level VI

Part A. How do you get social security and how much does it pay when you retire? These are important questions when you are planning your future. How much you receive when you retire depends on your average wage under social security. Most men cannot get social security until they are 65, but women have a choice of taking it at 62, 63, 64, or 65. If they take it at 62, they do not get as much money each month as they would have if they had waited until age 65.

Questions

1. How old must a man be to get social security?
2. How do they decide how much money you will get?
3. Why do women get more at 65 than they would at 62?
4. Why can women get social security before men can?

Part B. It did not take "sharpies" long to learn that thousands of people want to learn the skills needed by the growing number of occupations. Bogus, or fake, schools have grown up. These often promise to train people for such jobs as accountants and promise instant jobs when the training is finished. Many people who thought they were going to get good jobs lost all their savings. Before you pay the high cost of going to private schools find out about them.

Questions

1. Why have fake schools grown up?
2. Before you pay for one of these schools what should you do?
3. What do these schools promise people?
4. Why do many people go to these fake schools?
5. What are bogus?

PRESENT POTENTIAL LEVEL

To determine the student's potential level, material that has been carefully graded for readability must be used. These graded materials may be found in such sources as the Diagnostic Reading Scales (California Test Bureau), Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty (Psychological Corporation), Gilmore Oral Reading Test (Psychological Corporation), and the Gray Oral Reading Test (Bobbs-Merrill Company.)

The teacher reads the paragraphs to the student and asks him the accompanying comprehension questions. The level below which he fails to adequately comprehend the content of the paragraph is his present potential level. Adequate comprehension may be construed to mean that the student has answered 75 to 80 percent of the questions correctly.

If the aforementioned tests are not readily available, a teacher-made test for determining the student's present potential level can be constructed by using 150-200 word excerpts from graded adult materials, accompanied with 4 to 5 questions for each excerpt or paragraph.

Of course, we must always keep in mind that no test is sacred. The teacher will want to readjust reading levels for her students when her observations and the students' performance indicate that a change is necessary.

VISUAL AND AUDITORY PERCEPTION AND DISCRIMINATION

Letter Recognition: To be used with students who cannot function at the introductory level on word recognition. Have the student name the letter. Record errors in teacher's copy.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | Q | A | H | L | D | V | F |
| M | O | Z | I | J | B | S | X |
| G | T | K | W | E | N | P | U |
| | | | R | Y | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| t | b | d | p | m | l | k | r |
| n | a | o | g | x | u | c | i |
| j | h | f | s | v | w | q | e |
| | | | z | y | | | |

Blends: To be used with students who cannot function at the introductory level on word recognition. Have the student give sounds of the blend. Record errors on teacher's copy.

ph__ st__ ch__ br__ pn__ gl__

sh__ rt__ bl__ dr__ pl__ gr__

fl__ cl__ th__ tr__ cr__ ng__

Auditory Discrimination: The test below may be administered individually or be dictated to a group. In giving the test, stand behind the testees so that they cannot read your lips. Pronounce the words in a clear, but natural, voice. Do not exaggerate the sounds.

If the testing is done in a group situation, ask the testees to write - on a separate sheet of paper - the sounds they hear as directed below. For individual testing, record student's response on line opposite each word.

"The sound which you hear first in each of the words in Column A"

"The sound which you hear last in each of the words in Column B"

"The two sounds which you hear first in each of the words in Column C"

"The two sounds which you hear last in each of the words in Column D"

"The vowel sound that you hear in each word in Column E"

Column A
(Initial Consonants)

1. fascinate _____
2. capacity _____
3. public _____
4. sensory _____
5. hinder _____
6. zero _____
7. gambol _____
8. wanton _____

Column B
(Final Consonants)

1. reek _____
2. clod _____
3. lemon _____
4. wishful _____
5. quilt _____
6. grub _____
7. cram _____
8. smear _____

Column C
(Initial Blends)

1. sparkle_____
2. trilogy_____
3. clump_____
4. swarm_____
5. flee_____
6. spar_____
7. twirl_____
8. glob_____

Column D
(Final Blends)

1. crest _____
2. hump _____
3. swirl _____
4. adopt _____
5. junk _____
6. blend _____
7. ferment _____
8. strict _____

Column E
(Vowel Sounds)

1. gust _____
2. mast _____
3. flick _____
4. peck _____
5. swag _____
6. plot _____
7. host _____
8. sate _____
9. pike _____
10. Pete _____

SUMMARY SHEET

Check List of Reading Difficulties

I. RECOGNITION VOCABULARY DIFFICULTIES:

1. Letter names _____
2. Sound attack _____
3. Configuration _____
4. Picture class _____
5. Contractions _____
6. Punctuation _____

II. SIGHT PERCEPTION DIFFICULTIES

1. Reversals _____
2. Omissions _____
3. Confusions _____
4. Substitutions _____
5. Additions _____

III. AUDITORY PERCEPTION DIFFICULTIES

1. Omits sounds _____
2. Slurs sounds _____
3. Substitute sounds _____
4. Confuses sounds _____
5. Adds sounds _____
6. Poor enunciation _____

IV. COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES

1. General ideas _____
2. Major details _____
3. Retention _____
4. Directions _____
5. Organization _____
6. Assumptions _____
7. Inferences _____
8. Anticipation _____
9. Integration _____
10. Fact vs. Opinion _____

V. RATE DIFFICULTIES

1. Flexibility _____
2. Pointing _____
3. Eye movements _____
4. Skimming _____
5. Rhythm _____
6. Lip movements _____

VI. POSTURE DIFFICULTIES

1. Material too close
2. Material too far
3. Incorrect angle

VII. EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

1. Dermatitis
2. Palms sweating
3. Stuttering-stammering
4. Blinking
5. Voice
6. Nail biting
7. Tension movements

Independent Level _____

Instructional Level _____

Frustrational Level _____

Potential Level _____